

## **Ideal balance of work, play makes outdoor enthusiast's James Miller life enviable**

August 2, 2012



### **James Miller says there's no better place than the Lab to build a career**

James Miller, a graduate research assistant, gains incomparable experience through his participation on several institutional projects in his field of study, nuclear engineering.

He currently works on his dissertation with the Nuclear and Radiochemistry group, researching and monitoring levels of uranium and other heavy metals in radiation workers through experimental electrochemistry.

He and his team of engineers and technologists use a threshold-monitoring program to determine the percentages of radiation levels. The main focus is on trace amounts of uranium, a part of the biological assay program. This work directly supports the

weapons program, which further supports the Lab's mission to provide *reliable nuclear deterrence*.

Miller first came to the Lab in 2006 as a summer student. His college advisor, a former Laboratory employee, found him an internship through the student programs office. Miller highly recommends the Lab as a place to start a career, "The student programs are very mentor-driven, allowing you to gain phenomenal experience and build a professional network that will set you up for the rest of your life."

While pursuing his research, Miller wanted to meet and get involved with other students. He eventually joined the Student Association (SA) and later became president. SA is a student outreach program that provides tools and resources for a well-rounded and stimulating internship experience. Miller believes, "When you come to a new town, meeting people can be an obstacle; SA helps you make connections to other students, which then leads to friendships."

Miller keeps coming back because he feels, "The Lab is a great place to build a professional network; through numerous networking opportunities, I now have contacts in other scientific facilities across the country."

He also fell in love with New Mexico and takes full advantage of the outdoor recreational activities. "I am definitely an outdoorsman, so I enjoy New Mexico's climate and high-elevation. My favorite outdoor activity in New Mexico is skiing. Living in Los Alamos, you are close to many venues." Miller also is active in the Los Alamos community, which he finds very inviting and friendly. He is head coach of the local high school lacrosse team, who just finished their first season.

Ultimately Miller hopes to continue his research here through opportunities provided by the Lab's postdoctoral program. "I have access to top-level scientists in the world, doing some of the best work in the world; you can't find that anywhere else! There is literally not another facility where I can do my dissertation the way it is being done here."

James Miller's story is a great example of how the Lab provides students with the experience to build a rewarding career and the meet the people that will carry them into the future.

**Los Alamos National Laboratory**

**[www.lanl.gov](http://www.lanl.gov)**

**(505) 667-7000**

**Los Alamos, NM**

Operated by Los Alamos National Security, LLC for the Department of Energy's NNSA

